

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTERAMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

DEC 28 2005

Claims pending

- At time of the Action: Claims 1-26.
- After this Response: Claims 1-26.

Canceled or Withdrawn claims: None.**Amended claims:** None.**New claims:** None.

1. (Original) A method of upgrading firmware on a computing device comprising:

determining a current version of firmware installed on the computing device;

searching a predesignated location for a firmware upgrade;

sending an email notification to one or more predesignated email addresses if the firmware upgrade is found; and

installing the firmware upgrade onto the computing device.

2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the searching further comprises:

comparing the current version of firmware with the firmware upgrade to determine if the firmware upgrade will provide a more recent version of firmware.

3. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, whercin the searching further comprises initiating a browser application embedded on the computing device.

4. (Original) A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the browser application is stored on and executes on a second computing device coupled to the computing device.

5. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein installing the firmware upgrade further comprises:

receiving a reply from a recipient of the email notification comprising a user-designated time; and

at the user-designated time, downloading and installing the firmware upgrade onto the computing device from the predesignated location.

6. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the installing the firmware upgrade occurs automatically when the firmware upgrade is found.

7. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the predesignated location is a plurality of predesignated locations comprising:

a URL address accessible via the Internet; and

a local server address accessible via a local network.

8. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the one or more predesignated email addresses comprise a plurality of predesignated email addresses.

9. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the email notification comprises:

 a selectable option configured to automatically install the firmware upgrade onto the computing device; and

 information comprising:

 the current version of firmware;

 the location of the firmware upgrade;

 the cost associated with the firmware upgrade; and

 billing data required to complete an electronic commerce transaction to purchase the firmware upgrade.

10. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the computing device is embodied as a device selected from a group of devices comprising:

 a printer;

 a scanner;

 a copier;

a facsimile machine;
a multifunction peripheral device;
a modem;
a cellular telephone;
a personal computer; and
a personal digital assistant (PDA).

11. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the firmware is device driver software and the firmware upgrade is a device driver upgrade.

12. (Original) A computer-readable medium comprising computer executable instructions configured to cause a computer to perform the method of claim 1.

13. (Original) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12, wherein the computer executable instructions are further configured to cause a computer to perform the method of claim 1 automatically on a periodic basis.

14. (Original) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 12, wherein the computer executable instructions are further configured to cause a computer to perform the method of claim 1 at the request of a user.

15. (Original) A method of upgrading firmware on a computing device comprising:

predesignating a server location to be searched for a firmware upgrade;

predesignating an email address to which an email notification will be sent when the firmware upgrade is found;

receiving an email notification at the email address, the email notification comprising a selectable option configured to automatically install the firmware upgrade on the computing device from the server location.

16. (Original) A method as recited in claim 15, further comprising:

in response to a selection of the selectable option, requesting a time at which the firmware upgrade will be automatically installed.

17. (Original) A method as recited in claim 15, further comprising:

in response to a selection of the selectable option, requesting billing data required to complete an electronic commerce transaction to purchase the firmware upgrade.

18. (Original) A method as recited in claim 15, wherein the predesignating a server location comprises:

configuring an applet on the computing device with an address location on the server.

19. (Original) A method as recited in claim 15, wherein the predesignating an email address comprises:

configuring an applet on the computing device with an email address for receiving an email notification.

20. (Original) A method as recited in claim 15, wherein the firmware is device driver software and the firmware upgrade is a device driver upgrade.

21. (Original) A computing device comprising:
firmware stored in nonvolatile memory on the computing device; and
an upgrade applet configured to determine the current version of the firmware, search a predesignated location for a firmware upgrade, send an email notification regarding an available firmware upgrade, and install the available firmware upgrade in the nonvolatile memory.

22. (Original) A computing device as recited in claim 21, wherein the email notification comprises:

a selectable option to have the available firmware upgrade installed at a user-designated time; and

information comprising:

the current version of the firmware; and

the location of the available firmware upgrade.

23. (Original) A computing device as recited in claim 22, wherein the email notification further comprises:

information comprising:

a cost associated with the available firmware upgrade; and

billing data required to complete an electronic commerce transaction to purchase the available firmware upgrade;

and wherein the selectable option comprises:

a second applet configured to browse to the predesignated location and install the available firmware upgrade upon completion of the electronic commerce transaction.

24. (Original) A computing device as recited in claim 21 embodied as a device selected from a group of devices comprising:

a printer;

a scanner;

a copier;
a facsimile machine;
a multifunction peripheral device;
a modem;
a cellular telephone;
a personal computer; and
a personal digital assistant (PDA).

25. (Original) A computing device as recited in claim 21, wherein the nonvolatile memory comprises electrically erasable programmable read-only memory (EEPROM).

26. (Original) A system for upgrading firmware comprising:
a computing device having an upgrade applet configured to locate a firmware upgrade and send an email notification regarding the firmware upgrade; and
an email recipient configured to reply to the email notification, the reply comprising a user-designated time at which the upgrade applet will install the firmware upgrade onto the computing device.